

Careers in Management and Administration

Procurement

Did you ever wonder who buys the freeze-dried apricots the astronauts eat in space? Or what about the pyrotechnics that blow off the external tanks on the Space Shuttle? Or how about the teaching services that train cosmonauts to speak English and astronauts to speak Russian? Who buys the space vehicles and the work that supports every launch and space mission?

Much of what NASA needs is provided by industry. The Government buys its hardware, research studies, and services by way of a written contract. The Office of Procurement is responsible for this. We create the agreement, which includes defining what is being bought, the amount the Government will pay for it, and under what conditions the Government will do business with a company. The contract specialist, who is acting under the authority of a contracting officer, negotiates all aspects of the contractual agreement with representatives of the company.

In our role in human spaceflight, we spend over three billion dollars annually through contracts, grants, and purchase orders to support many areas, including:

- International Space Station Program
(changes to the laboratory, research payloads)
- Space Shuttle Program
(vehicle cockpit upgrades, solar panels, laptops)
- Engineering
(metals for spacewalk tools, batteries, equipment)
- Space and Life Sciences
(studies in the effects of microgravity on humans)
- Information Systems
(computer hardware and software)
- Center Operations
(construction, security protection, and maintenance)

Procurement involves work in various disciplines: finance, law, and technical writing, to name a few. Our work is not only diverse, it's always interesting and challenging, too.

Typical Degrees Business Management, Marketing, Accounting, and Finance

Finance and Accounting

Little would happen around the Johnson Space Center without someone providing finance and resource management. Even with these resources, someone has to forecast which programs will need money, how much money, and by when. It's like planning a family budget for a family of 21,000 and with billions of dollars in capital to expend. If you work with us, every time the Space Shuttle or a new International Space Station component launches, you'll be proud that you helped make it possible.

As the focal point for financial planning and execution at the Center, we design and implement the financial and resource systems for proper financial planning and data reporting; ensure that financial and resource decisions are put into practice; and integrate the planning, implementation, management, and control of all resources for which the Johnson Space Center is responsible.

We're divided into financial management and resource management offices that manage and report on the resources of most Center areas – from flight operations and engineering to the Space Shuttle and International Space Station Programs.

Typical Degrees Finance, Accounting, Business, Marketing, Management, and Public Administration